

Borough of Glastonbury.

Medical Officer's Report for 1908.

To the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses
of the Borough of Glastonbury.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg leave to submit to you my report for the year ending 31st December, 1908.

Area.—5,000 Acres.

Area.

Population.—4,016 (Census 1901).

Population.

Geology.—The higher, more populated parts of the Borough: Lower Lias, Clay, and Limestone; the lower and outlying districts: Alluvium Peat.

Geology.

Occupation.—Manufacturing Rugs and Gloves; Agricultural; a very large number of workers find employment at the Boot and Shoe Factories at Street.

Occupation.

Birth Rate.—Per 1,000 living: 18·90. 22·90. ^{1907.}

Birth Rate.

Death Rate.—,, „ 13·44. 13·44.

Death Rate.

Zymotic Rate.—,, „ Nil. Nil.

Zymotic Rate.

Infant Mortality.—Per 1,000 births: 26·44 151·1.

Infant Mortality.

Water Supply.

The supply has been adequate to the demand, which was very great during the dry summer. It was found necessary to draw largely on the store at Edgarley, but at no time was it found needful to curtail the supply to the Town. No doubt a large quantity was used for street watering and garden purposes; at the same time, from a hygienic standpoint, there is no doubt a very much larger amount is used for domestic purposes than was the case even a few years ago.

Water Supply.

Much work has been done by laying mains to parts of the town not on the system. The substituting larger mains for some of the existing ones is a matter which will, I believe, have your attention during the present year.

An extra engine is being erected at the pumping-station as a precaution in case of a breakdown with the present one. At the present time the Edgarley reservoir is being emptied for cleansing purposes. The suggestions I made in my last Annual Report for the analysis of the Town supply, and also with regard to a group of houses in Bove Town, where the owner had not complied with your order that not more than three houses were to be served from one tap, were not considered.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The connecting up of the drainage of several new houses to the main sewer; the repairing of numerous broken and faulty house-drains; the repairing, providing new, and laying on water to many existing w.c.'s constitutes the work done during the year under the head of drainage.

The Council have during the year completed the purchase of Cradle Bridge Farm.

With the coming year they will have before them a scheme for the disposal of the Town sewage on a scientific basis. The new system will include the collecting of sewage from parts of the town which hitherto have been, owing to various circumstances, unable to be connected up to the main sewer. The conveying of practically the whole of the sewage to Cradle Bridge, where it will undergo treatment which must abate several nuisances at present, and more especially in the past, in existence, such as the fouling of the Mill-stream, the escape of partially purified effluent into the Brue drainage scheme, and the wafts of sewage-laden effluvium which comes across the town when the wind is blowing from the direction of Cradle Bridge Farm.

The scheme must of necessity be costly, but it will be money well spent. Next to a good water supply the effective drainage and the scientific disposal of the sewage of the town is the most important work a Sanitary Authority can undertake, as the health and well-being of the community is absolutely dependent on it. Future generations must reap the benefit of your wisdom and forethought, and that seems to me to be the principle on which every Sanitary Authority ought to work.

Scavenging.

This work has been effectually carried out. The removal of the Town refuse to the yard at Cradle Bridge, where it is for the most part destroyed by fire, does away with the nuisance complained of by passers-by when the yard was close to the Meare Road. During the summer months the street gullies and surface-water drains were kept well flushed and disinfected. The nuisance created by the dust from motor-cars has been considerably abated over the parts of the main roads treated with "dust-laying" material. I hope the Council may see their way to extending these experiments. There is no doubt the enormous quantity of dust raised by motors must be the means of making the atmosphere very unhealthy, and of spreading disease.

Prevalence of Disease.

As shown in my quarterly reports, the health of the town has been good during the year. Influenza was prevalent during February, and caused one death—that of a person verging on 100 years. Some few cases of chicken-pox, whooping-cough, and mumps occurred during the first half-year.

Scarlet-fever broke out in August; the five cases were immediately isolated, and hopes were entertained that the disease was stamped out; a fresh outbreak, however, took place in October, and 13 cases were notified between then and the end of the year. An epidemic of German measles showed itself concurrently with the cases of scarlet-fever—a circumstance which, in many cases, made it most difficult to differentiate between the diseases. Fortunately the cases sent to the Isolation Hospital all turned out to be genuine scarlet-fever. Most of the scarlet-fever cases were of a mild type; only three gave any cause for anxiety.

Inspector's Report of the Sanitary Work completed in the year 1908.

To A. A. BLAKISTON, Esq., Medical Officer of Health.

SIR,—Herewith I beg to hand you my report for the year ended 31st December, 1908. Inspections, in company with yourself, have also been made under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, and of Milkshops, Dairies, Cow-stalls, Slaughter-houses, Bakehouses, and Workshops, but these are not included in the foregoing analysis.

Disinfection in the case of the recent epidemic of Scarlet-fever, and also where directed by you for tuberculosis and cancer, was carried out by means of fumigations with formalin and sulphur and spraying with liquid formalin; this includes the thorough disinfection of S. Benignus' Schools in November last.

The legal proceeding refers to the case of improper usage of the town sewers by allowing slaughter-house refuse to find its way into them.

Yours truly,

GEORGE ALVIN

Sanitary Inspector.

The number of births during the year has fallen very considerably below the average, being 76, as compared with 98.4, the average during the last ten years. The rate per 1,000 is 18.90—the lowest I have ever recorded, and compares unfavourably with the Urban County rate of 22.1, and the rate for England and Wales of 26.3.

The death rate is the same as last year—13.44—and is slightly below the County rate of 13.9, and compares favourably with 15, the rate for England and Wales in 1907.

The 54 deaths include 28 under the head of deaths from “all other causes.” Two due to Phthisis. Under regulations recently issued by the Local Government Board, cases of this disease occurring among paupers become notifiable by the Poor Law Medical Officer. I would suggest that the Council take steps in assisting the Poor Law Medical Officer by having the sputum of suspected cases examined by the Clinical Research Association. I have a supply of leaflets for distribution to warn and guide those who are brought in contact with, and those suffering from, this disease. These measures will, I hope, materially help in combating this terrible malady.

Five deaths were due to cancer, being two more than last year. Bronchitis and other diseases of the respiratory organs accounts for 8; heart disease, 10; and two were due to accidents. No deaths were recorded from zymotic disease. The infantile mortality of two deaths is abnormally low, the death rate being only 26.44 as compared with our own average for the past ten years of 117.04, and of 118 for England and Wales. I do not pretend to account for the low death - rate, but can only hope that mothers are beginning to take a more intelligent interest in the rearing of their infants. Possibly the lessons learned by the elder girls at the School Cooking Classes, and taken home to parents, may have had a beneficial effect on the feeding of the little ones. Then, again, the visits of the district nurses would doubtless prove useful in instructing mothers in the laws of hygiene, especially as to the free use of soap and water, and the benefits to be derived from a plentiful supply of fresh air, especially by night.

Isolation Hospital.

This institution, which has been empty for nearly two years, has again proved most useful in dealing with the outbreak of scarlet-fever. Thirteen cases have been admitted; three remaining in the Hospital at the end of the year. One case has been admitted from Street.

Isolation Hospital.

Disinfection.

A Threshes apparatus is in use at the hospital, and has been useful during the Scarlet-fever outbreak. Formalin and sulphur - dioxide are used for fumigation. Recently a spray apparatus has been purchased, which has been most serviceable, especially for use in the elementary schools.

Disinfection.

Housing of the Working Classes.

With the Sanitary Inspector, I visited and made a systematic examination of the following districts—Old Wells Road, Hartlake, part of Wells Road, Wick, Edgarley, Havyatt, Orchard Terrace, King Street, part of Northload Street (including Northload Terrace), Albert and Avalon Buildings, the new part of Benedict Street, Fairfield Terrace, Northover, and Beckery. 170 houses were inspected. Written or verbal notices were served to abate nuisances and remedy defects in drainage, etc.,; in nearly all cases these have been complied with. We found five cases of overcrowding, which we managed to deal with satisfactorily. Ten houses were empty, but even with these there is still a dearth of a class of house for the very poor.

Housing of the Working Classes.

Dairies, Cowsheds,
and Milkshops.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops.

Sixteen on Register; two added; three given up; twenty-nine inspections. Found fairly clean, more attention to white-washing and the removal of heaps of manure would make the milk supply less susceptible of contamination. The milk supply of the town and the revision of the register of sellers and cow-keepers is a matter the Council should take in hand. I made a somewhat similar suggestion in my last Annual Report, but it was not considered.

Slaughter-houses.

Slaughter-houses.

Six on register. One meat-shop. Twenty-two inspections. Verbal notices as to more efficient cleansing, the white-washing of walls, the repairs to floors, and the removal of offal, were given, and as a rule complied with shortly. There was a prosecution and conviction; the case is mentioned in the Sanitary Inspector's Report. The continuation of these nuisances is a disgrace to the town, and should be remedied by their abolition and the substitution of a public abattoir.

Bake-houses.

Bake-houses.

Seven; fourteen inspections. These are as a whole kept clean. Notices as to white-washing and the repair of minor defects have been complied with.

Public Elementary
Schools.

Public Elementary Schools.

These have been kept constantly under supervision. The offices and lobbies have been cleansed and disinfected at the close of each school term, and are kept in a more wholesome condition than they were some few years ago. S. Benedict's Schools were fumigated and sprayed during last term on account of some cases of Scarlet-fever among the children, and prior to the Town Council election. This outbreak of Scarlet-fever, combined with an epidemic of German Measles, considerably affected the attendance at this school.

A certain number of children have been examined by the School Medical Officer; up to this date his report has not been received. From personal experience gained by numerous examinations in past years, I know how many of the children suffer from physical defects. How many of these defects might be remedied and the children made healthy and able to learn will doubtless be included in the Medical Officer's Report. Suggestions as to treatment, etc., will also be made, which the School Attendance Committee will have to deal with, being authorised to do so by the County Education Committee.

Factory and
Workshop Act.

Factory and Workshop Act.

Twenty-six workshops on the register. Thirty-one inspections. The few defects found were remedied on serving written notices. I have only received four lists of out-workers, from three employers. It seems almost a farce to register these when numerous others have not been sent in.

Common Lodging
House.

Common Lodging House.

I have paid two visits with the Sanitary Inspector. Some defects found in the drains and offices were immediately remedied. The bedrooms and beds were very clean and tidy.

Bye Laws.

Bye Laws.

Same in force as last year; their contemplated revision will be having attention.

I cannot close my report without thanking the Sanitary Inspector for the kind and valuable help he has given me. Appended are the six tables of statistics.

I remain, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

A. ALEX. BLAKISTON,

Medical Officer of Health.

Glastonbury, January 18th, 1909.

THE
GLEMSFORD URBAN DISTRICT.

In the Administrative County of West Suffolk, and the Sudbury Union.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1908.

Prepared in accordance with the Regulations of the Local Government Board and of the West Suffolk County Council.

Population 1891, 2375; 1901, 1975. Area in Acres 2246. Number of persons per acre 0.9.

Inhabited houses 456. Average number of persons per house 4.3.

Physical site, on boulder clay above the Stour Valley, chalk underlying at depth of 130 feet.

Chief Industries—Agricultural, Hair-weaving and Mat-making.

The Parish of Glemsford obtained Urban powers in 1896. Prior to this formed part of the Melford Rural District.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS. The number of births registered during the year was 30 equivalent to a birth-rate of 15.1 per 1000 of the population. The birth-rates during the previous seven years were as follows:

		1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Births	50	40	46	46	41	32	30
Birth-rate	25.4	20.3	23.2	23.2	20.7	16.2	15.1

DEATHS. The number of deaths from all causes registered during the year was 19, to which have to be added 3 deaths of persons belonging to the district, which occurred in the Workhouse, Sudbury, making the total deaths 22, equivalent to a death-rate of 11.1 per 1000 of the population. The deaths and death-rates during the previous seven years were as follows:

		1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Deaths	50	30	37	26	32	28	32
Death-rate	25.4	14.2	18.2	13.1	16.2	14.1	16.2

INFANTILE MORTALITY. There were 2 deaths under one year of age equivalent to 66.6 per 1000 of births registered.

The following is the record for the last seven years:

		1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Deaths of children under one year		18	7	7	6	4	2	8	2
Rate per 1000 of births registered		360.0	163.1	152.1	130.4	97.7	62.5	200.0	66.6

The above statistics show a marked decline in the number of births, a decline which is very general. At the same time the deaths and Infantile mortality are below the average, and compare most favourably with other years. There were no deaths from any of the Zymotic diseases, only one death from Phthisis, two from Bronchitis and Pneumonia, one from Heart Disease, one from an accident, eleven of the deaths were of persons over the age of 65.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATION. There were 7 notifications during the year, and consisted of Diphtheria 1, Erysipelas 5, and Enteric Fever 1. The case of Diphtheria was an adult, no special sanitary defects were found on inspection of residence. The cases of Erysipelas were usually facial. The case of Enteric Fever was imported, being that of a girl aged 18, who was assistant nurse at an Isolation Hospital in Wiltshire, where cases of Enteric Fever had been nursed. She came home to her mother for a short holiday and developed the disease. Every precaution was taken to prevent any spread of the infection, and successfully.

SCHOOL. There is one Elementary School, sanitary condition very good, with the public water supply, a good playground is attached; very rare to have any infectious diseases spreading amongst the children. The Medical Inspection of the school children is carried out by the whole-time Inspector.

HOUSES. The majority of the houses belong to the working classes, and are adequate and in good condition, with ample open space about the houses, and cleanliness of surroundings. All have some garden ground or allotments.

WATER SUPPLY. The waterworks maintain an abundant supply from the deep boring. The quality is of great organic purity, though some discolouration sometimes occurs when kept, owing to a trace of iron in suspension, not more than a $\frac{1}{2}$ grain to the gallon; this could be removed by pressure and filtration, and a scheme to do this has been under consideration, but owing to the great industrial depression in the district has had to be deferred.

SEWERS AND DRAINS. The privy cesspools and pail system is the only mode of dealing with excremental sewage, this is disposed of chiefly on garden and allotment ground. The sewers and drains are only used in the district for slop and storm water. No new sewers were laid down during the year. Three ditches connected with sewers were cleaned out.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS. There are 5 factories for horsehair seating and mat-making, 25 workshops including 5 bake-houses. All have been under inspection and have suitable sanitary conveniences, and where both sexes are employed have separate accommodation.

No complaints have been received this year from H.M. Inspector of Factories.

The number of out-workers are 21.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS. There is only one registered Cowshed and Dairy in the district, all the cows are grass grazed. It has been inspected and fulfills all the requirements as prescribed in the model regulations 1905.

In addition to this there are eight persons who keep 2 or 3 cows each and have cowsheds for same and small dairies, they generally make butter, chiefly for themselves, though they sell some milk and butter to their neighbours. All of these have been inspected during the year and were found to be kept in accordance to the provisions of the Dairy, Cowshed and Milkshop Order, except in one instance where a defect in drainage was pointed out, this was remedied according to instructions given.

The following is the Report of the Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances, Mr. H. L. Taylor.

Number of Houses and Premises now connected with the waterworks mains, 344. The average consumption per head of water during last quarter, for all purposes was 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ gallons per day.

Number of New connections made with main sewers	3
" of Ditches cleaned out	3
" of New Pail Closets erected	5
" of Old Cesspools converted into Pail Closets	4
" of Nuisances remedied by written notices	20
" of Nuisances remedied by verbal notices	45
" of Inspections made in connection with Factories and Workshops	44
" of other Inspections	326

GENERAL SANITATION. Systematic as well as constant special inspections have been made during the year, as embodied in this report.

No Legal proceedings were necessary during the year.

Tabular statements according to the forms supplied by the Local Government Board of the statistics of births, deaths, and sickness within the district are appended to the Official reports.

J. SINCLAIR HOLDEN, M.D.

Medical Officer of Health.